



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Joseph H. Hogsett
Southern District of Indiana

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CONTACT: TIM HORTY

(317) 229-2409; Cell (317) 716-4250

tim.horty@usdoj.gov

HOGSETT ANNOUNCES FEDERAL CHARGES AGAINST EVANSVILLE DUO FOR LOCAL BANK ROBBERY

Pair allegedly donned masks, stole over \$11,000 from Evansville bank

PRESS RELEASE

EVANSVILLE – Joseph H. Hogsett, United States Attorney, announced today that Troy M.. Meriwether, age 40, and Tamera R. Johnson, age 25, both of Evansville, have been charged with bank robbery, following a collaborative investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Safe Streets Task Force, the Evansville Police Department and the Vanderburgh County Sheriff's Department.

"This indictment alleges a brazen bank robbery in broad daylight, in the middle of a busy residential neighborhood," Hogsett said. "That kind of dangerous lawlessness has no place in Evansville. Working with our law enforcement partners through our ongoing Violent Crime Initiative, we're sending the message that crimes such as these will face the full force of federal prosecution."

The indictment alleges that on September 24, 2011, Meriwether and Johnson entered the 1925 Lincoln Avenue branch of Old National Bank. They allegedly were wearing masks, and ordered the tellers to surrender the bank's money, removing \$11,090 in currency from the bank.

Announced in March of 2011, the Violent Crime Initiative (VCI) represents a district-wide strategy to work with local law enforcement and county prosecutors to combat drug traffickers and criminals that use and carry firearms in their illegal activities. In the first nine months of the initiative, the VCI produced a dramatic increase in the number of gun-related charges brought federally – from just 14 felony possession charges in 2010 to 103 last year.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Todd S. Shellenbarger, who is prosecuting the case for the government, Meriwether and Johnson each face a maximum of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine if convicted. An initial hearing will be scheduled in Evansville, before a U.S. Magistrate Judge.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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